

**West Stockbridge Master Plan Steering Committee  
Meeting Minutes – September 9, 2021**

***Zoom Meeting***

Dana called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) Members present: Dana Bixby, Chairperson, Eric Shimelonis, Curt Wilton. Ryan Beattie and Randy Thunfors were unable to attend. Others present: Bob Salerno, Historic Preservation and Finance Committee, Lauren Gaherty, BRPC Consultant and Phil Arnold, BRPC Consultant, Karen Kavanagh (MPSC Coordinator)

Dana reviewed the timeline of tasks that need to be accomplished by May 19, 2022.

- Dana stated that she, Bob, and Ryan have been working on the Historical Resources Section of the MP. Dana said she's working on a map for that section.
- Dana suggested that since Eric is working on the Green Communities Grant that he could take the lead on the Services and Facilities section of the plan in collaboration with Curt. Dana asked them to create a list of the services that would be included in the section and review it with the committee at the next meeting.
- Dana was pleased that the survey confirmed the need for senior housing. She stated that she would like to take the leadership role on Housing.

**Open Space Planning (OSP)**

Lauren introduced herself and gave a description of her past work at BRPC as an Open Space Planning expert. She stated that OSP's in Massachusetts are pretty prescribed. She said that the state has a workbook and an outline they want you to follow which includes a lot of information that is required before you can get a plan approved.

The OSP is a stand-alone plan, and you'll need an approved OSP to apply for some grant programs that are offered by the Executive Office of Energy and Environment (e.g., parkland grants and grants for purchase of open space).

Lauren has developed a skeleton of a plan for West Stockbridge. She said that the plan will need to focus on what the town residents want and that we will need an inventory of space that is open to the public (wildlife areas, town parks, rivers, lakes, etc.). As a first step, Curt will meet with Lauren and begin helping her inventory all the town-owned properties. When she and Curt go out there are a set of required maps that BRPC has already drafted which she will take in the field to ensure they are correct.

She will then work with a small group of people to develop a draft plan. The kind of people the State would like to see for a subcommittee, or a core group would be the Planning Board, Parks & Recreation, Conservation Comm., a representative from the Land Trust, and the Council of Aging. This committee will drive the Open Space plan.

Then as part of the OSP the Town must do an ADA assessment of its outdoor recreational facilities such as Town parks, playground, etc. This can be done after the OSP is sent to the State for review. Lauren said it's good to have someone who is familiar ADA compliance. Possibly, someone in BRPC or an agency in Pittsfield who can help with ADA assessments.

Dana asked if there was a timeline for her work. Lauren has reviewed, edited, and noted where additional information will be required. She has looked over the survey results. She hopes to get an updated version out shortly. In the meantime, she would like to move forward with getting additional feedback from the core group.

There was discussion about making another attempt to solicit additional input since the participation rate in the OSRP survey has been pretty low. Bob Salerno said he would send a message to the mailing list of the Historical Society to let them know about the survey and encourage their participation.

Bob suggested that it would be good to push on the state to improve the trail heads for parking and accessibility. Lauren said that the issue could be raised as part of the OSP.

There was discussion about three sections of the Master Plan document that have been updated (Executive Summary, Introduction and Demographics). Demographics needs more work and will be an item on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Committee had a broad discussion about economic development. And whether that topic should be part of the West Stockbridge Master Plan. The consensus was that economic development should be included, starting with a broad vision supported by several goals that would define where economic development should be focused.

**MPSC August Schedule** - The Master Plan Steering Committee scheduled the following meeting date for September 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Kavanagh